MELODIES OF OUR KENTUCKY HIGHLANDS OR SONGS THAT "JEST GROWED UP"

Heredity and Environment According To The Mountain Demosthenes.

(In Louisville Post.)

Some years ago the Rev. W. S. Hager, a boy from "Bloody Breathitt," in the moutains of Eastern Kentucky was spending a vacation at his native home, Jackson, after a long missionary services in Japan, I heard one of his vacation sermons. By native dank complexioned, residence abroad had molded the mountaineer into something of a Mongolian. His bongue had been tipped with the involuntary twist that turned his great native land into the "Oonited Tates," in spite of the painful effort to subdue that and other parts of speech back into the dialect of his partive hills. His facial expression had caught the Orient tone. His little one-year-old girl (as she then was,) born in Japan of the purest Cumberland mountain parentage might have been the fruit of a long line of Mongolians reaching back to the in heads replote with thoughts of oth Japanese Adam's apple tree. Respective champions of horodity and environment as most influencing mental moral and physical development might find this a puzzling case, with odds in favor of environment.

Judge Carlo B. Lyttle, of Manches ter. Clay county known on the stump and at the bar as the "Rough and Ready Demosthenes" of the mountains, holds to the theory that even the names of towns, rivers, creeks and other surroundings are impressed upon the character of the people.

as we sat amusing on the shores of Goose creek, "what could be expect. He would hear to no word of protest ed of Red Eye, Hoss creek, Big Stink or proffer to pay. ing, Cut Shin, Goose, Hell-for-Sarthe community?

My friend was not pressed to guess what effect the name of Manchester, latter, at that time, being much in evidence around Manchester,) might have, for Manchester was his home,

Drawing his pencil, the Judge jotted down "on the spar" and on a

Its measly moonshine tide, Big Stinking scatters, as he goes, Old Hell-for-Sartin wide.

When Bull Skin into Cut Shin runs. And Cut Shin into Goose; No wonder people get their guns And (sometimes) turn 'em loose.

coppermisms were set to heavenly mu- ward to "matriculate." Thou Sucet Gliding Kedron: Ye school before?" Banks and Braes O'Bonnie Doon' and "No-o-ome,"-he heskated; then other immortal melodies? Could there proudly lifting the unkempt headever have been any shooting from "but I seed a book onest!" behind these rocks? The very ten- Look out for the mountain boy who

"again" something. The wise judge Saxon. dent either, may work.

fy and to soften."

England lady, some years past mid- the sympathetic tear.

grass and Kentucky bluegrass to learn sengs as Miss Rachel expressed it. that in our Kentucky Cumberlands I "jest growed up," little by little adhave never met a you-ens or a we- ded as the inspiration came, but no uns. It is not known how it happen- suggestion from outside.

AND THE PROPERTY OF STATE OF STREET STREET, AND

grammar is mostly confined to East Tennessee and North Alabama, To from "Chaue-r's purest well of English undefiled," - and blessoms all Bible. "Unless ye become as these (little) ones, etc." "You (young) shall perish if the boat capsizes." You-ens and we-ues abound down there yet unless some fautastic school marm has run them out. If so, she Deal John Hardy in the game has broken down the purest English while trying to correct an alloged John Hardy threw down another fifty error of speech.

"Ignorant mountaineers," indeed! strong Anglo-Saxon blood inhabit there. They may not all be "cul- I'm going to blow him away."

"Knowledge dwells

Wisdom in minds attentive to their own."

er men.

The stranger there will meet with more generous hospitality, more unaffected courtesy, more devotion to fort. good neighborship (in its broadest sense,) more of the real Christ! The writer, on bitter, cold Fedruary day, having lost his gloves was riding barehanded from London to Manches-

ter. A mountaineer, shivering on the roadside, rushed out into the mud All for tifty cents; and forced upon the horseman a "What," he once asked the writer pair of thick, home-made gauntlets, which left his own hands exposed.

"The gloves are yours stranger you tin and the like except disaster to need 'em more'n I do, and all I charge is, pass 'em on to the next man." For any incidental kindness the morntaineer may bestow, his invariable if exchanged for "Winchester" (the injunction is, "Pass it on; pass it on to the next man who may need it!"

Of course we all rejoice in every movement for a better school system where charity begins and sometimes in the mountains as elsewhere in Ken tucky, but the hope remains that her noble poeple may never become too cultured to be civilized. Some few stray sheet of paper these impromptu of them (is times past) would kill an enemy for revenge, but not for robbery. Educate 'em to the point not When Red Eye into Hoss Neck pours to kill-they know how not to rob by instinct. Then, as a rule, the moun tains will show a nebler population than the Bluegrass or the sedge grass Far out in a mountain county, thir-

ty miles from a railroad or school house, lived a tew-headed boy ten years old, in an humble log cabin (his parents were poor), which had no ves "Suppose," the Judge went on, must like of book or printed page-not eva "I'M GOING TO JOIN THE ARMY." -just look at Goose creek, dimpling was built nearby in which a sweet, as it flows, none loveller on earth- young lady consented to teach a pulsuccess Goose creek and our other lie school Sammy, wildered, came for

sic like 'Flow Gently Sweet Afton, "Samuel," the teacher asked, in her Among Thy Green Braes; Bonnie Ayres gentle way, "have you ever been to

derness of name and song would melt seed a book oncet! He's coming into the heart to civilize, to sancti- Father Abram, three hundred thousand strong, and when he gets there The regular preposition "against" he'll be heard from. He comes of is rarely heard in the highlands. The a race purer than American-of a rac college graduate, after a brief so- untained as yet with any alien mixjourn, catches himself running up ture—the pure, unadulterated Anglo-

the crudite lawyer utters his edic's In the mountains, songs are sung from the beach or fulminates from that you can bear nowhere else. the forum "agin" whatever stands in There is for was only a very few his way. Men and women whose edu- years ago) an absence of the ragcotion may be as liberal as the uni- time stuff which tickles the ears of university can supply employ the sole "civilized" groundlings. In most of cism involuntarily after a brief stay these songs there breathes the weird, He: It shows what envisonment or acci- far-away melody-the tenderness of words and music like the waiting of And, by the way, what right has the winds in mountain caves-human the cultured East to turn up its sympathy for the hero of the story pointed nose? Some years ago I was whom misfortune (or crime) has ever incidentally associated for several taken. The hero may be wicked bemonths in the same household at youd all conscience, but it is he, Washington City with a cultured New not "the dirty policeman," who gets

de age, of the bluest Boston blue I caught the words-would I could blood (to mention which strain would write the music also!-- of John Clardy cause surprise,) who had become deep- from protty and potite Miss Rachel E. ly interested in General Ben But- Hayes, youngest sister of Douglas ler's flat-money fad, and drew her Hayes; Breathatt county-fame, who inspiration from reading newspaper bears the unique distinction of having reports rather than oral discussion. "carned" safter serving time) two par-Her glasses were perhaps, not as good dons, one each from Gov. J. C. W. as her reducation; she invariably dur- Beckham and Gev. W. T. Taylor. Liting her financial arguments, refer- tie Rachel "sang the wild songs of red to General Butler's paper as "flat" her dear native last," accompanied money. The treasury not being flat on the melodon, in a natural, not (when spread out), the good old lady cultivated voice, soft, low sweet and very naturally misconceived the "is- silvery-the voice with which Jenny layed caught the world's our from It may surprise some of the "letter- here mountain home in Switzerlanded swine" of the New England sedge- John Hardy like other mountain

ed, but such usage of good, old-time' Since 1898, as before, the Kentucky

Cumberlands have furnished then their quota of soldier called on. Mare and Venus find, each in the other, a pronounced affinity, more pronounced in the mountains

than elsowhere. Weather "John Hardy" be his real name or not, he is still serving a life sentence. He enlisted, among the first, in the Spanish-American and got as far as Pensacola, where "the devil led him" into a game of poker "on the dark sea bar." "Losing out" and got a life-term. The song have miss d it is neither credit nor goes: In the game be slew the windiscredit to any section but it comes ner, tried to escape but was captured. JOHN HARDY

through our King Pames version of the John Hardy was a-standin' by the dark sea bar,

He was unconcerned in the game; ones be ready for school". "We (youn A lady threw down a fifty cents, say

> "Deal John Hardy, in the game, poor boy,

п

cents. And says, "This money will play! The wisest and the best of our great. And the very first man who wins my money

Poor boy, he was soing to blow him away!

The poor boy did lose his money, including the "Lady's" fifty-cent piece. blow" the winner away, made a break for Kentucky, but was captured somewhere on the historic Elkhorn, presumably between Lexington and Frank-

111. Oh, boys, I'm charged with a hanging crime.

Of which you know the offence; Murdering that man at the dark son

Poor boy! all for fifty cents!

John Hardy had married a pretty wife And she was all dressed in red; She stepped wp to the jail house door And it almost killed her dead! Poor boy, it almost killed her dead!

V. Johnny was a-standing at the depot station,

Se dark he could not see. When a dirty old policeman took him by the arm.

Saying, "Johnny, come go along with me."

Poor bey, Johnny, come go along with me."

The fifth verse of the song belongs among the first of a dozen or more but I quote the sequence as I recall

The following was sung by sweet little Rachel. This song also "jest growed up" line at a thme. It is the farewell of another soldier to his sweetheart. "It's been my sad misfortune," he says (with mental reservacation no doubt) "a soldier for to be." Pensacola, however, was only 300 miles away, not 5,000.

So fare you well, my darling, So fare you well, my dear, I'm going to join the army, I'm going to volunteer! It's been my sad misfortune A soldier for to be. Oh, be contented, darling, And don't you weep for me.

I'm going to Pensacola. To tarry for awhile, So far from you, my darling, About five thousand miles!

She wrong her lily-white hands, So mournfully she cried: You're going to join the army, And in that war you'll die. Your waist it is too slender, Your fingers long and small, Your cheeks too red and rosy To face a cannon ball!

I know my waist is slender, My fingers long and small, But it would not make me shudder To see ten thousand fall!

114.

I hear the cannons roaring, The balls are flying high. The drums and fifes are sounding, To drown the dreadful cry! In the center you'll be wounded, In the center you'll be slain: It'll break my heart asunder If I never see you again! IV.

The ships all stand at anchor, The boys all dressed in blue-You're going away to join them, And, love, what shall I do?

I'll sail around the enemy My fortune for to try; I'll think of you, my darling, And oft sit down and cry. VI.

If you'll portray a single life Throughout the great campaign. I'll marry you, my darling,

When I return again.

Then fare you well, my darling, Then fare you well, my dear,

It is hoped that the fuithful couple were not obliged to "portray the sinsle life" for even one year, to say nothing of ten thousand, but that the hero returned with the same rosy checks that had faced the cannon ball. The reader will agree that there is more (perhaps) in the musle of these songs, of which I heard many, than in the wording, but to be touched almost to tears, one must hear the weird, melancholy cadence of the voice.

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